

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (CRAB)
REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: Council Referral – Request from Elizabeth Barber to Repurpose a Newspaper Vending Box

BACKGROUND: At the Regular Meeting on February 8, Council received a request from Elizabeth Barber to repurpose a newspaper vending box and referred it to CRAB. This Washington Post Express box is located at the bus stop at Southway and Crescent. It is no longer used by its owner.

Dr. Barber proposes this newspaper box be stocked with free magazines so transit riders and others would have access to reading material. Dr. Barber, and potentially others, would supply the magazines. Dr. Barber had contacted the Washington Post Express and an official there verbally indicated they would donate the box to the City provided the Washington Post express logos are painted over.

DISCUSSION: At the CRAB meeting on April 19, this request was discussed with Dr. Barber and Barbara Simon. CRAB was supportive of this idea, but did not believe this initiative should be linked/targeted to any particular demographic group. There was discussion about how to repaint the box. There was also discussion of potential titles for this box. “Bring One- Take One” and “Free Magazines” were both discussed and the latter was preferred by CRAB.

CRAB expressed concern about litter in/around the box and believed this project should be implemented on a trial basis.

RECOMENDATIONS:

The City should grant this request subject to the following:

1. This idea will be implemented for a trail period (6 months) at which time it could be evaluated and any concerns addressed.
2. Dr. Barber agrees to periodically restock the box with magazines and monitor the box for trash, inappropriate material, vandalism, etc.
3. Dr. Barber, Ms. Simon and others agree to repaint the box.

Respectfully Submitted

Rick Ransom, Chair
Community Relations Advisory Board